

Research Division Note #54 - February 28, 1994

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ARTIST EMPLOYMENT IN 1993

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics, the artist work force declined from 1992 levels after two years of growth. The total artist work force fell from 1,735,000 in 1992 to 1,708,000 in 1993. These figures include both employed and unemployed workers in eleven arts occupational areas including: actors and directors, radio and television announcers, architects, dancers, musicians and composers, photographers, painters/sculptors/craft-artists/artist printmakers, authors, college and university professors of art/drama/music, and artists not elsewhere classified.

At 1,612,000 in 1993, data on artist employment was down 1.8% from its 1992 level of 1,642,000. The number of unemployed artists declined for the first time in three years from 93,000 to 87,000. As a consequence of the reduction in artist employment, the 1993 artist unemployment rate (the ratio of unemployment to the total labor force for artist occupations) increased from 5.7% in 1992 to 6.5% in 1993.

ARTIST OCCUPATIONS COMPARED TO OTHERS

Between 1992 and 1993 the labor force for All Civilian Workers increased 0.9% (126,005,000 to 127,087,000). For Professional Specialty Occupations, a broad group of occupations that generally require substantial professional training and/or education and includes the eleven artist occupations, the labor force increase over the year was 3.2% (16,825,000 to 17,360,000). For the eleven artist occupation groups, the increase in the total work force declined 1.6% (1,735,000 to 1,708,000).

Over the year, employment figures in the civilian work force increased 1.5% (from 117,583,000 to 119,306,000). The same figure in the Professional Specialty Occupations increased 3.1% (from 16,393,000 to 16,904,000). The employed figure for the combined artist occupations fell 1.3% (from 1,642,000 to 1,612,000).

Arts in Education

*Challenge &
 Advancement*

Dance

Design Arts

Expansion Arts

Folk Arts

International

Literature

Locals

Media Arts

Museum

Music

*Opera/Musical
 Theater*

*Presenting &
 Commissioning*

State & Regional

Theater

Visual Arts

Nationally, unemployment figures fell 7.6% (from 8,422,000 to 7,781,000). Unemployment for Professional Specialty Occupations rose 5.6% (from 432,000 to 456,000). The unemployment figure for the combined artist occupations decreased 6.5% (from 93,000 to 87,000).

The unemployment rate for the civilian work force decreased from 6.7% in 1992 to 6.1% in 1993. The unemployment rate for Professional Specialty Occupations remained constant at 2.6%. The unemployment rate for the combined eleven artist occupations increased from 5.7% in 1992 to 6.5% in 1993. (See note at bottom of Table 1)

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS OF ARTISTS 1985-1993

The artist occupation work force has grown 15.3% since 1985, although the 1993 data show a reduction from the 6% increase in 1992. The 1993 decline is the first over the nine-year span since a relatively insignificant reduction in 1987.

Over the same period, employment in Professional Specialty Occupations has increased at a significantly higher rate (24%) than employment in artist occupations (14.2%). However, the unemployment rate for Professional Specialty Occupations continued an increasing trend in 1993 while the unemployment rate in both the total civilian work force and artist occupation work force declined for the first time since 1989.

INDIVIDUAL ARTIST OCCUPATIONS 1/

This section compares the employment trends among the individual artist occupations. The most significant gains in work force were observed in Authors (increasing 9.2%) and Photographers (gaining 8.2%). However, the increase in total work force for Photographers includes a significant increase in unemployment from 6,000 in 1992 to 11,000 in 1993.

The overall reduction in employment figures for the eleven artist occupations is most evident in the Musicians/Composers area which declined 7.5% from 188,000 in 1992 to 174,000 in 1993. Figures in Architects

1/ These data are based on a sample survey and are subject to sampling errors. Small occupation groups (less than 75,000) are less likely to be accurate than the larger occupation groups. (See note at bottom of Table 1)

further elevates the overall reduction in employment by falling 10.9% (from 138,000 to 123,000).

The total unemployment figure for the combined artist occupations fell by 6.5% from 1992 to 1993. The most significant decline in unemployment is found in the Designer area, which has the largest proportion of artists occupation. Unemployed Designers fell 21.4% from 28,000 to 22,000. The largest increases in unemployment are in Photographers (up 83.3%) and in Other Artists (not elsewhere classified), which doubled from 4,000 in 1992 to 8,000 in 1993.

ACTORS AND DIRECTORS

The overall work force in this area decreased from 111,000 to 108,000 resulting in a 20% decrease in unemployment figures. The employed work force in this area remained stable from 1992 to 1993.

ANNOUNCERS

Figures for the employed work force fell 13.2% over the past year. The total work force for announcers was down to 51,000 from 58,000 in 1992. The unemployment figures remained unchanged, though the reduction in the employed work force caused an increase in the unemployment rate to 10.3%.

ARCHITECTS

A significant 12.3% reduction in the total work force in a result of a decline in the employed work force from 138,000 in 1992 to 123,000 in 1993. The combined artist occupation unemployment figures are assisted by a 37.5% drop in the unemployed work force resulting in a 3.9% unemployment rate in this area.

AUTHORS

A 11.2% increase in the employed work force and a 33.3% decline in unemployment combined to reduce the unemployment rate in this area to 2.7%. The total work force in this area increased from 131,000 in 1992 to 143,000 in 1993.

DANCERS

A modest increase in the total work force is brought about by an increase in unemployment. The total work force increased from 22,000 in 1992 to 23,000 in 1993. The employed work force in this area remained constant resulting in an increase in the unemployment rate to 11.5%.

DESIGNERS

The total work force for Designers dropped from 570,000 in 1992 to 563,000 in 1993 brought about by a 21.4% reduction in the unemployed work force. A small decrease

in the employed work force resulted in an overall reduction in the unemployment rate from 4.9% in 1992 to 3.9% in 1993.

MUSICIANS/COMPOSERS

After a significant gain in the employed work force in 1992, the total work force in this area fell from 197,000 in 1992 to 180,000 in 1993. The employed work force reduced 7.5%, however, the unemployed work force decreased by a third from 9,000 in 1992 to 6,000 in 1993.

PAINTERS/SCULPTORS/CRAFT ARTISTS/ARTIST PRINTMAKERS

Employment figures remained constant from 1992 to 1993. The reported unemployment rate increased slightly from 4.2% to 4.3%.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

The total work force jumped from 135,000 in 1992 to 146,000 in 1993. This 8.2% increase is brought about by a 4.7% increase in the employed work force and a significant increase in the unemployed work force, from 6,000 in 1992 to 11,000 in 1993.

TEACHERS OF ART/DRAMA/MUSIC (higher ed.)

A 5.9% increase in the total work force in this area counters two years of reductions. An increase in the unemployed work force created an overall increase in the unemployment rate from 1.4% in 1992 to 4.0% in 1993.

OTHER ARTISTS

Although the total work force in this area fell a modest 1.0%, the unemployment rate almost doubled from 4.3% in 1992 to 8.5% in 1993. This is created by a 5.3% decline in the employed work force combined with an increase in the unemployed work force from 4,000 in 1992 to 8,000 in 1993.

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These national employment statistics are obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey, which reports employment information on over 325 occupations, including eleven artist occupations. A respondent (16 years or older) is considered employed if during the survey week he/she did any paid work in his/her business, profession, or farm. To be considered as working in one of these artist occupations in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' survey, one must be working during the survey week and have described that job/work as one of the eleven artists occupations. It is important to note that those holding more than one job are counted in the job in which they worked the most hours during the survey week.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics counts a person as unemployed if they did not have a job during the survey week, were available for work, and had made specific efforts to find a job during the prior four weeks. In order to be counted as unemployed in a particular occupation, an unemployed person's last full-time job must have been in that occupation. Therefore, to be counted as unemployed in one of the artist occupations, one must not have had a job in the survey week, been available for work, have made specific efforts to look for work in the last four weeks, and last worked in an artist occupation.

The reader should be cautious about comparing these data to other estimates of employment and unemployment in artist occupations since differences in definition and methodology can cause wide variances. 2/

2/ One example of disparate methodology is Actors Equity Association's tracking of its member's employment. In its December 1993 issue of "Equity News," the Association reports that its paid membership is 33,320, of whom 14,133 are working under Equity contracts. Actors Equity defines its paid membership as those people who are registered members of Actors Equity, fully paid in dues, and eligible for Equity-contracted work. Consequently, Actors Equity bases its employment figures on the number of work weeks for which the total membership was engaged and compensated in Equity-contract work. Actors Equity does not collect information on the employment status of its membership that did not work under Equity contracts. Therefore, whether these numbers are holding acting jobs outside of Equity contracts, or working at jobs other than acting, or are without any job is not known.

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CAVEATS: This Research Division Note is the eleventh in an annual series utilizing the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) adapted by the Current Population Survey in 1983. Changes in the occupational classification system improved the consistency in measuring employment in the artist occupation groups. Caution should be used when comparing these data with pre-1983 data.

Research Division Reports and Notes of related interest:

Reports

- #1 Employment and Unemployment of Artists: 1970-1975
- #16 Artist Employment and Unemployment: 1971-1980

Notes

- #2 Artist Employment in 1982
- #7 Artist Employment in 1983
- #11 Artist Employment in 1984
- #15 Artist Employment in 1985
- #22 Artist Employment in 1986
- #29 Artist Employment in 1987
- #31 Artist Employment in 1988
- #33 Artist Employment in 1989
- #35 Artist Employment in 1990
- #37 Artist Employment in 1991
- #39 Artist Employment in 1992

Sourcebook of Arts Statistics: 1989, Research Division,
April 1990

1992 Addendum to the Sourcebook of Arts Statistics,
Research Division, April 1992

Table 1. Artist Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment

Occupation	1993	1992	1991	1990	1985
Total, All Civilian Workers	127,087,000	126,005,000	125,303,000	124,067,000	115,462,000
Employed	119,306,000	117,583,000	116,877,000	117,914,000	107,150,000
Unemployed	7,781,000	8,422,000	8,426,000	6,874,000	8,132,000
Unemployment Rate	6.1%	6.7%	5.5%	5.3%	7.2%
Professional Specialty					
Occupation	17,360,000	16,825,000	16,451,000	16,132,000	13,946,000
Employed	16,904,000	16,393,000	16,058,000	15,818,000	13,630,000
Unemployed	456,000	432,000	393,000	314,000	316,000
Unemployment Rate	2.6%	2.6%	2.4%	1.9%	2.3%
All Artists	1,708,000	1,735,000	1,618,000	1,508,000	1,482,000
Employed	1,612,000	1,642,000	1,533,000	1,548,000	1,411,000
Unemployed	87,000	93,000	85,000	60,000	71,000
Unemployment Rate	6.5%	5.7%	5.3%	3.7%	5.0%
Actors & Directors	108,000	111,000	100,000	108,000	91,000
Employed	96,000	96,000	87,000	97,000	77,000
Unemployed	12,000	15,000	13,000	11,000	14,000
Unemployment Rate	11.2%	13.5%	13.2%	10.6%	15.4%
Announcers***	51,000	58,000	63,000	55,000	54,000
Employed	46,000	53,000	60,000	52,000	51,000
Unemployed	5,000	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Unemployment Rate	10.3%	8.0%	4.1%	5.5%	5.3%
Architects	128,000	146,000	134,000	147,000	133,000
Employed	123,000	138,000	127,000	142,000	130,000
Unemployed	5,000	8,000	7,000	5,000	3,000
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	5.6%	5.0%	3.7%	2.2%
Authors****	143,000	131,000	93,000	85,000	71,000
Employed	139,000	125,000	91,000	84,000	70,000
Unemployed	4,000	6,000	2,000	1,000	1,000
Unemployment Rate	2.7%	4.9%	2.3%	1.4%	1.4%
Dancers	23,000	22,000	20,000	16,000	17,000
Employed	20,000	20,000	18,000	14,000	15,000
Unemployed	3,000	2,000	*	*	*
Unemployment Rate	11.5%	7.3%	*	*	*
Designers	563,000	570,000	557,000	549,000	504,000
Employed	541,000	542,000	527,000	531,000	484,000
Unemployed	22,000	28,000	30,000	18,000	20,000
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	4.9%	5.4%	3.2%	3.9%
Musicians/Composers	180,000	197,000	162,000	167,000	163,000
Employed	174,000	188,000	156,000	162,000	152,000
Unemployed	6,000	9,000	6,000	5,000	11,000
Unemployment Rate	3.3%	4.8%	4.0%	3.2%	6.5%
Painters/Sculptors/ Craft Artists/ and Artist Printmakers	232,000	232,000	217,000	224,000	207,000
Employed	222,000	222,000	208,000	217,000	200,000
Unemployed	10,000	10,000	9,000	7,000	7,000
Unemployment Rate	4.2%	4.3%	4.0%	3.0%	3.2%
Photographers	146,000	135,000	143,000	127,000	134,000
Employed	135,000	129,000	136,000	123,000	129,000
Unemployed	11,000	6,000	7,000	4,000	5,000
Unemployment Rate	7.5%	4.1%	4.8%	3.1%	3.5%
Teachers of Drama, Art, and Music (higher ed.)	36,000	34,000	40,000	46,000	42,000
Employed	35,000	34,000	40,000	45,000	41,000
Unemployed	1,000	***	***	1,000	1,000
Unemployment Rate	4.0%	1.4%	1.1%	2.7%	2.4%
Other Artists**	98,000	99,000	89,000	84,000	66,000
Employed	90,000	95,000	83,000	81,000	62,000
Unemployed	8,000	4,000	6,000	3,000	4,000
Unemployment Rate	8.5%	4.3%	7.3%	4.1%	5.6%

*Data base is too small for reliable estimate. **Not elsewhere classified. ***Less than 1,000. ****Data for 1992 are not fully comparable with data for prior years because of the introduction of the occupational classification system used in the 1990 census.

Notes: These labor force statistics are based on a sample survey and, consequently, are subject to sampling errors. Relatively small changes in employment in the smaller artist occupations are often not statistically significant. For a more detailed discussion, see Research Division Report #16, *Artists Employment and Unemployment 1971-1980*, Appendix B, "Reliability of Current Population Survey (CPS) Statistics." All the unemployment rates shown in the table (with the exception of 'All Artists') were calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics using unrounded data.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Research Division
National Endowment for the Arts
February 1994

Table 2. Trends in Artist Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment, 1985-1993

Occupation	Change, 1992-1993		Change, 1985-1993	
	Level	Percentage	Level	Percentage
Total, All Civilian Workers	+1,022,000	+0.9%	+11,625,000	+10.1%
Employed	+1,723,000	+1.5%	+12,156,000	+11.3%
Unemployed	-641,000	-7.6%	-531,000	-6.4%
Professional Specialty Occupations	+535,000	+3.2%	+3,414,000	+24.5%
Employed	+511,000	+3.1%	+3,274,000	+24.0%
Unemployed	-24,000	-5.6%	-140,000	-44.3%
All Artists	-27,000	-1.6%	+226,000	+15.3%
Employed	-30,000	-1.8%	-201,000	-14.2%
Unemployed	-6,000	-6.5%	+16,000	+22.5%
Actors/Directors	-3,000	-2.7%	+17,000	+18.7%
Employed	0	*	+19,000	+24.7%
Unemployed	-3,000	-20.0%	-2,000	-14.3%
Announcers***	-7,000	-12.1%	-3,000	-5.6%
Employed	-7,000	-13.2%	-5,000	-9.8%
Unemployed	0	*	+2,000	+66.7%
Architects	-18,000	-12.3%	-5,000	-3.8%
Employed	-15,000	-10.9%	-7,000	-5.4%
Unemployed	-3,000	-37.5%	-2,000	-66.7%
Authors***	+12,000	+9.2%	+72,000	+101.4%
Employed	-14,000	-11.2%	+69,000	+98.6%
Unemployed	-2,000	-33.3%	-3,000	-300.0%
Dancers	+1,000	+4.6%	+6,000	+35.3%
Employed	0	*	-5,000	-33.3%
Unemployed	-1,000	-50.0%	*	*
Designers	-7,000	-1.2%	+59,000	+11.7%
Employed	-1,000	-0.2%	+57,000	+11.8%
Unemployed	-6,000	-21.4%	+2,000	+10.0%
Musicians/Composers	-17,000	-8.6%	+17,000	+10.4%
Employed	-14,000	-7.5%	+22,000	+14.5%
Unemployed	-3,000	-33.3%	-5,000	-45.5%
Painters/Sculptors/ Craft Artists/ and Artist Printmakers	0	*	+25,000	+12.1%
Employed	0	*	+22,000	+11.0%
Unemployed	0	*	+3,000	+42.9%
Photographers	+11,000	+8.2%	+12,000	+9.0%
Employed	-6,000	-4.7%	-6,000	-4.7%
Unemployed	-5,000	-83.3%	-6,000	-120.0%
Teachers of Art, Drama, and Music (higher ed)	+2,000	+5.9%	-6,000	-14.3%
Employed	+1,000	+2.9%	-6,000	-14.6%
Unemployed	+1,000	*	*	*
Other Artists***	-1,000	-1.0%	+32,000	+48.5%
Employed	-5,000	-5.3%	+28,000	+45.2%
Unemployed	+4,000	+100.0%	+4,000	+100.0%

*Data base is too small for reliable estimate.

**Not elsewhere classified.

***Data for 1992 are not fully comparable with data for prior years because of the introduction of the occupational classification system used in the 1990 census.

See note at bottom of Table 1.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Research Division
National Endowment for the Arts
June 1993